A Lamenting VVord,

SHEWING,

How there is a Deſertion come upon us, and what are the Evils, and with whom they are found that have procured it unto us.

DELIVERED,

By way of Teſtimony unto the preſent Work of God, and againſt the defection of theſe Times in the drawing back of many from it.

LONDON,

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To all the Pretious Saints, who ſtand upon their Watch in this hour of Temptation.

THat you are kept in watchfulneſs, in faith, and waiting for the Lord, whil'ſt others are eating and drinking with the drunken, and beating their fellow ſervants, is a mercy to your ſelves, a terror to the Enemy, and a refreſhing to my ſoul.

The Cauſe, Spirit and Intereſt of late ſo contended for by men, and owned by God, that has for ſome time lain dead and buried in the hearts of many, and in the defections of this day ſeems to be riſing again among you, and to receive ſome revivings through your Faith, and a freſh ſupply of the Spirit of Grace upon you.

As you have left behind you the low and carnal Principles of many, who propound no higher an iſſue to the late Adminiſtrations and Changes among us, than a worldly eſtabliſhment of the Eccleſiaſtical and Civil State, and are looking after ſome better thing as provided for theſe laſt times, ſo the Lord direct you unto a right underſtanding what that good thing is that God will bring to paſs in the Earth; that at leaſt ſome of the tops of the Mountains and Rocks of that good Land may be in your eye, to ſtrengthen and guid you whil'ſt you are labouring towards it, through the deeps of your infirmities, temptations and ſufferings.

And as both inward and outward afflictions have alwaies attended them that have took part with the Lord, ſo you may look to meet with the ſame in your ſelves, eſpecially at this day, wherein this old corrupt World drawing near its end, and Satan knowing his time is but ſhort, will both combine their moſt principle Agents, their moſt exquiſite skill, force and power, if poſſible, to cut off the faith, and hope and remnant of them that love and wait for the glorious Coming and Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus; Wherefore for your help in the way, let me put you in mind of a few things.

Let your eye be unto the Lord Jesus; as his Appearance and Kingdom is the consummation of our faith and hopes, and the great and last issue intended by Providence in the Changes and Revolutions that have been and may yet come to pass among us; so setting him in the eye of your faith, will be of best use to direct and help you in all those works and affairs that lead thereunto: abide in Christ; so, whilst the clouds and storms of temptations, troubles and sufferings, do beat upon your state, in him you shall break through and overcome: you stand by faith; if you go forth in the confidence of your gifts, graces or any other privileges without the Lord, you shall fall as others before you have done and come to nothing.

In the late Changes and shakings that have been among us, the Lord Jesus was that Spirit that moved the wheels, and disposed all in the beginning unto his last and great works of mercy and judgment, which he is determined to do, and wherein you should wait upon him in these last times: though the visible wheels seem to be at a stand, yet let your faith and prayer be going on, and you shall see, that our righteousness tarries not, and the judgment of our enemies slumbers not.

Let not the treachery and declination of these times from the interest of the Lord Jesus trouble you, in the falling of many Stars, the slumbering of the Virgins, the defection of the Civil and Military instruments, the roaring of the Sea and waters, that is, the rage of the people; but let these things rather encourage you to look up, for thy summer, your Redemption draws nigh.

As God has appointed a day, wherein Jesus Christ shall shine forth in all his dignities and offices, as Law-giver, Saviour, King and Judge, and wherein all Kingdoms shall serve and obey him, that is, all Authorities and Constitutions both in the Church and World shall be dissolved, or refined into a subjection unto him, his Law and Kingdom; so there shall be no settlement unto any Government or People, no success unto any Counsels or Policies now or old that shall rise up against the Lord or his People in this work: upon this stone have many of our Princes already fallen, and the wheels of them that are since come up in their places are troubled, drive heavily, and the waters, their troubles do encrease upon them: therefore stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved, looking for him; for yet a little while of darkness and trouble upon the world, of temptations and trials upon your selves, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

A lamenting Word.

WHen I call to remembrance the times that are paſt, the days wherein the Lord walked in the midſt of us, for a ſpirit of judgement to them that ſat in Council, and for ſtrength to them that ſet the Battail to the Gate; when through the faith and teſtimony of a praying people, and the preſence of the Lord going before them, the Pillars of our earth began to ſhake, and the unrighteous to fall at his rebuke: And do conſider the condition we are now brought back into, how our ſoul is bowed down to the duſt, and our belly cleaveth to the earth; how the Lord hath caſt off and put us to ſhame, and goes not forth with our Armies; makes us to turn back from the enemy, and hath ſcattered us among the Heathen; we are made a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us; wiſedom is departed from our Counſellours, and the viſion from our Prophets; I cannot but from theſe things, with ſome grief conclude that the Lord is departed from us.

Much time hath been ſpent in ſeeking unto many Phyſitians, and more in impreachings and mutual recriminations, whilſt the effect of all hath proved no better then a heightening of our diſtemper, and our wound made more incurable. Surely it would be a work far more becoming a people in the condition we are in, to ſeek out what is that wickedneſſe and folly which hath been done among us, which hath provoked ſuch a ſignal and continued diſcountenance from the Lord againſt us, and ſuch a diſaſter and perplexity as is upon us: a ſhort reflexion upon the times that are paſt, how

things were with us then, together with a due consideration of our present posture, how things are with us now, may be of much use by way of giving us light in this inquiry.

The light we had in the late War and changes, what it was.

When the time came that God would judge and pluck down those two unbridled and bloody Powers, Monarchy and Prelacy, which had for many hundred of years divided the prey between the souls and bodies of the people of this Nation; that people among us whom he intended should serve him in this work, he was pleased to honour and furnish with three special gifts, with light unto the work, with faith in it, with a signal testimony of providence, giving victory in the work.

The light that was given, was but little at the first, and came forth by degrees as we were able to receive it, and as there was need, God leading us by the hand, and as it were teaching us to go from strength to strength, from one difficulty to another in the beginning of the work, not knowing what would be the end of it; so that we were constrained at divers times to professe and publiquely declare, that our way was dark, and we knew not what to do untill the Lord was inquired, and further light vouchsafed.

By that light we had we were directed, First, to a sight and discerning of the then present evil state of things, from which we groaned to be delivered: And Secondly, to a prospect of a better and more excellent way to be pressed after.

As to the first, the whole frame & constitution of things both in Church and State appeared to us to be leavened and corrupted with Antichristian principles, destructive to the great interests of Civil and Gospel-freedome: Particularly, First, the exercise of an imposing power over the conscience in things of faith; together with the exercise of an Arbitrary power over the outward Rights and Liberties of men unsubjected and unaccountable to the Law or the people; the one of these being an intrenchment upon the prerogative of Christ, and the liberty of the spirit in his servants; the other upon the natural soveraignty and freedom of the people.

Secondly,

Secondly, We were led on to take notice of the conjunction and intermixture of Magistracy and Ministry, stretching themselves beyond their just capacities into each others line; the Magistrate constituting and imposing a Ministry and worship tempered to his interest; the Ministry strengthning it self in its dominion over the people by the Law of the Magistrate; and so by a mutual combination of their powers and interests serving each other, in order to the checking and resisting the work of Christ in every Age, which usually consisted in a greater growth of light and truth then their Interest or Temper could bear.

Thirdly, The Laws besides the supernumerarines of them, the obscurity and perplexity of words and notions, were observed to have many things in the body of them composed in times of Superstition and Tyranny, and hurtful and offensive to the work of Reformation; and the practice of them to be corrupt, dilatory and chargable.

Fourthly, Persons were invested in Offices of Rule and trust, from corrupt and carnal respects, as Politique, Noble, Rich, &c. whilst others furnished with a spirit of government were rejected; also men were chose into the Ministry according to Rules of humane qualification or national conformity, whilst others of spirit and gifts more worthy of it, were removed into corners; by the one the streams of judgement and equity were stopped, by the other the streams of light and truth: the Heathenish state of things, worldly pomp, glory and preheminency were kept up by both, and the Gospel-way which is in simplicity, moderation and brotherly condescention, was excluded.

Lastly, The way of Churching whole Nations and Parishes, of Tithes, Patrons, presentations and innumerable things more were judged by us then to be no other then the remaines of Romish infection, as yet by reason of ignorance or Interest unpurged away.

The removing far from us this corrupt frame of things, that way might be made for some better things then in our eye seems to me to have been the subject (as to the visible part of it) of that sharp contest lately in this Nation disputed and gained through blood and prayer after a first, second, third and fourth War.

That better ſtate of things which by the good hand of the Lord then upon us was diſcried, as that which might anſwer the ends of Providence, the expectations of the godly, and the exegencies of an unſetled Nation, was in the place of the Old, the erecting a new Baſis, a conſtitution upon the Foundation of Goſpel-principles, the whole building both in Church and State to be compoſed and framed according to Goſpel-light and Rule: that is, ſo that all the ſeveral Offices and Powers committed to Chriſt, might be viſibly owned and exerciſed in the Nation, *Iſa.*33.22. *For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will ſave us.*

As this way was that which Perſons of cleareſt light and principles preſſed after, and hoped to arrive at, and by declarations from the Army was atteſted unto, ſo the wheels of many ſignal Providences, the interpretation of prophetical Scriptures ſealed up before, and the Pulſe of a faithful praying people ſeemed to aim and beat this way; it being to be ſuppoſed that the laying again the foundation of meer Civil Right and freedome, being no more then a worldly Reformation, would be a reſult no ways anſwerable to ſuch ſpecial tokens and glorious deliverances from ſpiritual and outward bondage as were beſtowed upon us.

And although ſuch a foundation built up according to Goſpel-pattern may not be conceived to be that very Kingdome that ſhall be ſet up in the laſt days; yet would it be a diſpenſation expedient for ſuch a people as we are, eſpecially at ſuch a time as this, who thereby might be put into a better capacity then as now we are of removing the ſtumbling ſtones, and preparing the Lords way, and ſo might put our ſelves into a poſture of waiting and readineſſe to receive him when he comes in his Kingdom.

But if the backſliding part of this generation who have ſeen the goings of our God and King among us, ſhall ſay in their hearts, where is the promiſe of his coming? let all things continue as they were from the beginning, and ſhall draw back from that good work wherein they at firſt run well; yet let ſuch as yet rule with God, and are faithful with the Saints, as wiſe men that know the time and their work,

work, not ſuffer their eyes to ſleep, nor their eye-lids to ſlumber, till the Lord will bring to perfection thoſe glorious things, whereof we have been in travail, but have not yet been able to bring forth.

The faith we had in the late Changes, what it was.

Unto this light then vouchſafed the Lord added (as of ſpecial uſe for a people that are under ſuch diſpenſations as we were) a faith to look for great things; the ſum whereof in brief is as follows.

That the ſet time was come, or at the doors, wherein the Lord would call to a reckoning the Rulers and Shepherds of the Earth, for the Male-adminiſtration of their Rule and Truſt, in the exerciſe of Tyranny over men by the one, of Lordſhip over Gods heritage by the other; the effects whereof ſhould begin in theſe Weſtern Nations firſt, as being the undoubted horns of that Beaſt, to whom the cup of wrath is firſt to be given, before the reſt of the Beaſts; and this to be done firſt by the ſpirit of the Lord in his people, ſtirring them up hereunto; after by the Lord himſelf, at his own appearing.

That the Lord would pour out his ſpirit in ſuch meaſures of light and zeal, and create in a remnant of his people ſuch diſcerning and judgement, as ſhould convince the world, winnow profeſſors, diſcover and deſtroy the remaining Idols of Superſtition, formality and worldly policy from among us; and hereby would take the advantage of blowing his Trumpet, and lifting up an Engine to other Countries, until he hath gathered a people out of all Nations; and then will ſet up the mountain of his houſe above all mountains; that is, will raiſe up his people to that height and greatneſſe, that from thence he will manifeſt himſelf King over all the Earth, in giving the Law to all people, and rebuking ſtrong Nations to the end of the Earth.

That in order to the bringing of things to this glorious reſult, the Lord will (as it is neceſſary) ſhake the Heavens and Earth, the Sea and dry Land; that is, will ſo trouble and ſhake the univerſal frame of things, both in the Civil and Eccleſiaſtical,

Eccleſiaſtical, in the Religious and Heatheniſh States, as ſhall occaſion great commotions, perplexities and overturnings everywhere, and among all ranks and degrees of men; and no healing nor ſettlement ſhall be found, until he come whoſe the Kingdom is. The beginnings of which ſomewhat appeared in the days of *Luther*, but were more eminently revived by the late wonderful tranſlations of Providence in theſe our Iſlands.

Whatſoever lower aims many might have, whoſe principles carried them no higher then unto ſome particular forms or models, into which they deſired the eccleſiaſtical and civil conſtitutions might be caſt; yet that the hopes and faith of many were raiſed up to look for theſe and ſuch like great things, as haſtening on in their ſeveral degrees and ſeaſons, did undeniably appear by declarations from the Army, by the prayers and expectations, by the frequent aſſemblings, inquirings and conſultations of a praying, obſerving people, to ſeek out what might be the intent and deſignation of Providence, and the work the Lord was about in our days; who hath promiſed a day wherein the Lord will be ſeen over them, and his decree ſhall go forth as the Lightning, and the Lord their God ſhall ſave them in that day, as the flock of his people, for they ſhall be as the ſtones of a Crown lifted up, as an enſign upon his Land, *Zechariah* 9. 14, 16.

Beſides, the ſpirit that was upon many, ſtirring them up to pray, fight and go forth againſt all Parties and Intereſts in oppoſition hereunto, to bear up under the many deſertions and diſcouragements by the falling away of falſe brethren, to follow God through interprizes and paths unpreſidented, highly offenſive, and ſeemingly irregular, doth give further evidence what manner of faith was at work among us: the reaſon of which faith, and the means whereby it was begotten and increaſed in us, next unto the inward manifeſtation of the counſelling ſpirit of God, ſeemed to be the bringing to clearer light ſome Goſpel-truths, the intepretation of Propheſies, and the events of Providence anſwering thereunto, with other hints and tokens ſought out by a people that had pleaſure therein.

The

The Teſtimony God gave to us in the late Changes, what it was.

The Teſtimony that God gave unto us in a viſible way, in the face of the world, and as a Crowning to the whole work, was Victory over the enemy, given in through a ſeries of Providence, as much wondered at home, as famous and prodigious abroad.

Whilſt the foundation and ſubject of the War was declared as of no more but a worldly nature, external rights and freedome, and the over-ruling part of Parliament and Army were ſuch whoſe principles were but worldly and common, ſo long Providence ſhared the ſucceſſe of Battail in a common and indifferent way between us and the enemy; but when by a remarkable turn of things God had laid aſide, and took up other inſtruments, and new model'd Army of brighter and more refined principles, he forthwith let down the ſcale, conſumed the enemy with a continual ſtroke, till he left none remain; concerning which, as an interview of ſome particular paſſages therein, theſe hints may be given.

As their foundation was laid in wickedneſſe, ſo God poured confuſion upon their Councels, made their way as the dark and ſlippery places, and cut off the ſpirit of their Princes in the day of Battail, whilſt he ſhined upon the Councels and ſpirits of his people, and went forth before our Armies as in the Chariot of ſalvation; like as it was in the days of old, when God went forth before Iſrael in a cloud, which was darkneſſe to the Camp of the *Egyptians*, whilſt it gave light by night to the Camp of *Iſrael*.

Though they had the concurrence of worldly power and policy, uſurpation, pomp and greatneſſe, under the ſhadow whereof they truſted; yet all fell before the righteous and integrity of a believing, praying, everywhere deſpiſed people; as if the Lord would have us gather, that the time to take down all ſuch intereſts with their Abettors was nigh at hand, that way may be made for the bringing in thoſe better things which God hath reſerved for theſe laſt days.

When the commandments and inventions of men, Arbitrary powers, conſtitutions and practiſes impoſed in times of darkneſſe:

darkneſſe and tyranny were ſet up in a way of ſuperiority over, and by force of Armes defended in oppoſition to the Government of Chriſt, liberty of Conſcience, and the principles of common juſt and right; when things were thus, it pleaſed God to paſſe righteous judgement between the evill and the good, by riſing up as a cruel and terrible one againſt all ſuch Egyptian Task-maſters, and yoakes of bondage; whence the wiſe in heart might know and conſider, that henceforth no Authority that ſhall riſe up, no weapon that is formed againſt the building up of Sion, againſt ſpiritual principles, and righteous intereſts ſhall proſper, but ſhall molder and be broken to pieces.

After that this glorious cauſe and intereſt, and the friends thereof had got ſafe through, and triumphed over the power and policy of all ſecret and open enemies at home; it pleaſed God afterward to make it and his people a cup of trembling to all enemies from abroad that came againſt us: neither the reformed pretences of the Scottiſh Nation, nor the naval force and pride of the Dutch could ſave them from thoſe ſignal and terrible rebukes, which their anger and hatred againſt us and our righteous cauſe, provoked the Lord to viſit upon them. So then, what ayled you oh ye ancient Thrones of Monarchy and Prelacy, with your King and Armies, that ye fell down? thou *Scotland*, with thy three Armies at *Preſton*, *Dunbar*, *Worceſter*, that ye fled and were not? yet *Dutch* that ye ſunk into the bottome of the Sea like a ſtone? was it not ſome bright beams from the face of the Lord Jeſus, ſhining through the faith, the prayers, and the righteous cauſe of his people, that made them look fair as the Sun, clear as the Moon, and terrible as an Army with banners, that confounded your counſels, cut off your ſpirits, and conſumed you to nothing?

Thus it was with us in times paſt, when we leaned upon the Lord, when we followed him in untrodden paths, and ways that were not known; then the Lord was among us, making darkneſſe light before us, leading us on from one degree of light to another, from one mountain of ſalvation to another, having led us ſome dayes journeys into the Wilderneſſe, towards that Kingdom that he hath promiſed to ſet up in the laſt days.

The

The deſertion that is now upon us, what it is.

BUt after that God had ſubdued our enemies under us, cloathed us with ſalvations and victories, diſpoſed the power into our hands, and thereby had put us into a capacity of performing the promiſes and paying the vows made to the Lord and his people in the day of our ſtraights, we ſetled down into ſecurity and eaſe, not attending what further duty might be incumbent upon us, to make further progreſſe in the good things begun until they grow up to their perfection; as if Providence had deſigned no higher ends in theſe acts of ſeverity and goodneſſe among us in throwing down one generation and ſetting up another, then the putting of his people into a condition of meer worldly freedome and quiet: So being raiſed up from a low and oppreſſed eſtate unto the ſeats of Authority and Rule, we fell in love with our new greatneſſe; and being ſet up in a condition of outward ſecurity and freedome, we ſat down at eaſe therein, and refuſed to follow the Lord through thoſe further difficulties and trials whereby only can be obtained an entrance into the promiſed reſt; and thus being turned from after the Lord, he is departed from us, and hath left us in the Wilderneſſe to be ſcattered in the darkneſſes, dreams and devices that we have choſen.

The firſt ſymtome of the deſertion that is upon us.

THat the Lord is not among us as in former times, will appear too true, if our preſent condition, and the ſymptomes that are upon us be but ſeriouſly obſerved.

Firſt, We are degenerated from thoſe publique and righteous principles, juſtice, faith, light, zeal and purity, whereby we were acted and moved to preſſe after worthy and righteous things, and are returned back to the dark and filthy principles of worldly policy, ſelf-love, national conformity, and ſuch like, building again the things that we ſometimes deſtroyed:--- let old adminiſtrations and formes of Government, publique Inſtruments and proceedings be ſet up or

laid aside, as they shall be found subservient or otherwise to the present works of providence, and the interest of *Sion*. Let all personall or particular interests inconsistent with the preservation and good of the whole body of the people be dethroned and aboliſhed.---Let principles of light and truth, and a reformation of all things framed according thereunto be zealously pressed after, though the Nations be angry, the people moved, and all things thereby put out of course. All confidence in our selves or other men being laid aside, let us lean upon the Lord for light and counsel what to doe, and follow after him as he shall go before us in his word and spirit. Such things as these enlivened with a spirituall savour and heat from the Lord, were upon the hearts of many for a season, who are since fallen in love with that woman *Jezabel* which has seduced them to commit fornications with her; to wit, the present Antichristian and corrupt frame of things both in Church and State, known by its pomp, luxury, greatness, and the pleasures of this world, which has been already shaken, but is not yet removed from among us.

No lesse noble and worthy were those works unto which a door was opened to us of the Lord, and were at first pressed after by us, whilst our integrity remained with us, to wit, the doing execution upon all such Authorities, Laws, and Constitutions as had been erected and continued for the defence of Tyranny, Usurpation, single Prerogative, lording Clergy, &c. and as had by force and persecution put a check upon the common Right and Freedom of men, and upon the Light and Liberty of Christians. The purging out from the Ministry, Ordinances, and Churches, &c. all mixture of humane Contrivance, State policy, and Romish devices, to the intent that all proceedings therein might be reduced under the sole Authority of Gospel-rule, and the Unction of the Spirit. The framing of all things both in Church and State according to such just rules, and the disposing all power into such faithfull hands, as that the Administrations on Earth might submit themselves to be ordered according to that fuller measure of Righteousnesse, light, and truth, as these last dales look for, untill the Kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. But

But now that ſpirit and heart we had to theſe things is departed from us, and nothing is more minded by moſt then the ſecurement and preſervation of thoſe very corrupt intereſts which by many providences, faith and prayer were deſigned for deſtruction: remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy firſt works, or elſe I will come againſt thee quickly, *Revel.* 2. 5.

A ſecond Signe,

ANother ſign that the Lord is not among us as in former yeers appeares herein, that our ſingleneſſe of heart to the Lord is gone, & we are joyned to other Lovers; it pleaſed God of late to viſit theſe our Northern Iſlands with ſome brighter beams then he vouchſafed to other Nations, and to chuſe theſe ends of the earth where he would begin to ſet up the Kingdom of his Sonne above all the oppreſſive and Antichriſtian powers of the world; then he alone was our King and Counſellour, our Captain in the field, then we waited for his light alone to ſhew us our way, and to lead us through all our ſtreights and feares; when his grace ſhining forth through the preaching of the Goſpel had freed us from a ſpirit of bondage within, and by a wonderfull ſucceſſion of providences had delivered us from many yokes of bondage without, then it was upon our hearts that the admittance of Jeſus Chriſt unto the exerciſe of his Regall Power and Soveraignty over us, would be the only expedient to make up all our breaches, to heale all our diſtempers, anſwer all our exigences, and make us a name, a joy and a praiſe in all the earth; then we ſaw it was not a King, nor Nobles, nor any impoſed Liturgy, nor a Reformed Directory, nor the Congregated waies, nor any thing whatſoever that could deliver us, but to have the Lord himſelfe in the midſt of us, and to be all taught of him, that is, to have his Word and Spirit no longer as an underling, but to be ſet up above all, ſo as to direct, judge, and bear rule in all Councils, intereſts and affairs amongſt us.

But now that a little ſpace of breathing from the former troubles hath been given, we have no more need of him, we

have choſen us other Saviours; we are Lords, we reigne, and are full, and come no more at him; without him we have Judgement and Councel to ſteer our courſe aright, and mannage all proceedings with ſucceſs: formerly, before our difficult or new undertakings there were ſeen among us, tears and prayers, and travellings of ſoule; the Churches and other faithfull Saints were ſent to for counſell, prayer, and help, but now we can without God conſtitute Governments, eſtabliſh a State-Miniſtry, make warre, and conclude peace; we can rear up again the ſhaken walls of Monarchy and National Church-way, defame, impriſon, and perſecute all that will not bow to it; we can doe all this and the Lord not know of it, ſee how this filthineſſe is ſpread over the whole body of profeſſion; The Presbytery ſometimes honourable for their faith, zeale, and purity; in ſhaking off the yoke of Prelacy, how did they after aſſume that preheminence to themſelves which they ſuffered under before; and deny that Chriſtian liberty to their brethren which themſelves at firſt groaned after. Independency and the Baptized way, precious and lovely at the firſt for their ſpirituall ſimplicity and ſingleneſs to the Lord, not leaning upon the Authorities of the world either for promotion to themſelves or preheminence to their way, how are they ſince claſped about the Powers and Pillars of the world; many chiefe leaders become Chaplains, Triars, Maſters, and in all Dignities and Offices for worldly advantage; and ſo are become the chief ſtones and beams in this old worldly frame of things, by their gifts and parts renewing the luſtre thereof, which themſelves had before in contempt and deteſtation. The Army no leſſe terrible abroad for their zeal againſt Kingly intereſt, then beloved at home for their principles of Light, Liberty, and tenderneſs; diſplaying the Banner, and ſounding an alarm to a ſpiritual Kingdom, having the Lord going before them, and they following him through fire and waters and many dangerous paſſages; how are they now become mercenary, holding the Sword in defence of an Intereſt for the ruine whereof it was firſt drawn. The profeſſing part of the people, how are they ſet down at eaſe, ſome in forms,

others

others in notions, divided about gifts, priviledges, and apprehensions, while *they lie upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretch themſelves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the ſtall, that chant to the ſound of the viall, and invent to themſelves inſtruments of Muſick like David, that drink wine in bowls, and annoint themſelves with the chief Ointments, but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joſeph*, Amos 6. 4.

We have been looking for ſalvation to mountains and hils, to Authorities, Army, the perſons and actings of men, whilſt that wherein our ſalvation is, to wit, the further riſing and going forth of that bleſſed Sunne whoſe beams have already dawned upon us, and a profeſſed ſubjecting of our ſelves and affairs thereunto, has not been regarded; but the confuſion and emptineſs that God already has, and may further write upon all theſe props may fulfill that word upon us: *Ye ſhall be aſhamed of the Oakes which ye have deſired, and ye ſhall be confounded for the Gardens that ye have choſen*, Eſay 1. 29.

A *third Signe.*

A Diſcerning the ſigns of the times, and what is our preſent work (a favour ſometimes vouchſafed of the Lord) is now taken from us, which is a further ſign that the Lord is departed.

The preſence of God with his people repreſenting himſelf under ſuch names and reſemblances as ſuited with their preſent diſpenſation, was that Star that led his people in all former Ages, and of late in our days, unto a diſcerning both of time and judgement; and of what Iſrael ought to do; as it is written, *In thy light we ſhall ſee light*; that is, the appearance of Chriſt to his people, is that which gives them light to know both the preſent work of God and their duty therein; ſo it was to the ſeaven Churches in *Aſia*: If God communicates his counſels to any concerning things not ſeen as yet, either the judgements or mercies that he is determined to reveal in the world, it is a ſign of his preſence and favour with ſuch; *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing*

which

which I do? Gen. 18.17. The Wife of *Manoah* ſaid unto him, If the Lord were pleaſed to kill us, hewould not at ſuch a time have told us ſuch things as theſe, *Judg.* 13.23. As on the contrary, it is a ſign of a man or a people from whom God is for the preſent departed, to be left to the darkneſs of humane contrivements, without any voice or viſion of God concerning the preſent adminiſtration, and their duty therein.

When *Jeruſalem* knew not the day of their viſitation, their houſe was left unto them deſolate, and thenceforth they ſaw him no more unto this day: When the late Rulers and Prelacy of *England* would not ſee nor conſider the work of the Lord that was to appear in our Land, the Sun ſet over their heads, and their place was left empty: The generations ſince, that have loſt that judgement and heart to the work they ſometimes had (as it is to be feared) are left and laid aſide as of no more uſe, at leſt in thoſe more excellent and glorious works which remain behind.

Whilſt the Kingdom and work of our Lord Jeſus was beautiful in our eyes, and our zeal and labour, and patience, and ſufferings therein abounded, then we had a ſight into thoſe great things God was about, (*viz.*) deſolations upon all Tyranny and uſurpations, upon all the corrupted Religions and Governments of the world, by the brightneſſe of Chriſt's riſing among his people: But now ſecurity, fulneſſe and conjunction with Antichriſtian intereſts hath blinded us ſo, that we cannot ſee a far off, to the end of them; a manifeſt witneſſe of the truth whereof is with ſadneſſe of heart to be ſeen every where at this day; the common Aſſemblies generally being unſenſible of it; the gathered Churches for the moſt part ſilent; the Court careleſſe in it; the Army having deſerted it as to any further appearing for the bringing to perfection that bleſſed intereſt, which providence, faith and prayer has been in travell with.

Whoſoever ſhall obſerve the poſture we are found in at this day, how divided among our ſelves about the time and diſpenſation we are under; ſome ſaying, lo here is Chriſt, that is only within, denying his Perſon or viſible Kingdom; others, lo there, in their order and way, limiting the preſence and work

work of Christ within their party or perſwaſion; others ſaying, the time is not come that the Lords houſe ſhould be built, becauſe they would firſt build their own cieled ones: others dwellers among the Moles and the Bats, ſaying, no ſuch time either is or will be at all; all things continue as they were from the Creation, God will doe no new thing in the Earth; theſe things conclude that the tract and print of the footſteps of the Lord in his work among us is hid from our eyes.

When our former troubles had beſet us round, and our feare within were as many as our fightings without, and the ſentence of death was written upon all waies and means of eſcaping by any viſible hand, then we cried unto God out of the wilderneſs and low place; and the Lord rent the Clouds and came down in his ſtill voyce into our hearts, in tempeſts and whirlwinds upon our enemies; then the Lord Jeſus ſhone upon us, and his ſavours upon our hearts melted us into trouble and ſorrow over the corruptions of our Rulers, teachers, and people, Laws and Government, over the darkneſſe, outward and inward ſlavery upon our own and all Nations; then we ſaw that the taking down of this old, worn, and viciated fabrick of things both here and all the world over, to make way for glory and beauty to dwell in all lands, was that which providence aymed at in his diſpenſations among us; when we ſhall be weary of our new-dreſſed Idols both in Religion and ſtate, and ſhall finde them unable to defend us from thoſe deſertions from God, and afflictions from men that our backſlidings have already in part and may further bring upon us; then it may be we ſhall cry to him that redeemed us from our firſt bondage, and then in the mount will the Lord be ſeen, and his work appeare.

A fourth Signe.

DEadneſſe to God, and ſervitude to men is entred in among us in the place of that free, fervent, and active ſpirit that was ſometimes upon us; a ſad token that the Lord is not among us. While the Lord Jeſus was in the midſt of us, as the great inviſible wheele, then all the other wheeles moved

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in their courſes ſwiftly; all inſtruments whether in Councill, Army, or Chriſtian aſſemblies, moved in their ſeverall ſtations with vigour and judgement; all miniſtred ſomething, ſuch as they had, towards the work; ſome brought carved work, ſome fine linnen, others badgers skins, every one according as they had received? as the dew lay upon *Gideons* fleece, when all the earth was dry, ſo while all other people and parties were dead and dry as to the work, the ſpirit of the Lord was with his people, whereby they were ſtirred up and enabled, ſome to engage againſt the Outworks of *Babylon*, Courts, Armies, impoſed innovaſions and ſuperſtitions; ſome to aſſaile the very pillars thereof, Monarchy and Prelacy; ſome by their precious doctrines of Grace righteouſneſs, and peace by Chriſt alone vanquiſhed her miſts and fogs of Legality and worldly elements, whereby the ſoules of men were held in darkneſs and bondage; others revealed her ſecret and more covered parts, ſought to lay flat all her Bulwarks and Avenues, Forts and Towers throughout the land. Such bright and pleaſant beams from the Lord Jeſus, after a long and dark winter night, ſhined through the Goſpel and Adminiſtrations of providence as ſet on fire the defires of many after him, and their zeale againſt whatſoever hindred the advancement of him in the exerciſe of his power as King of Saints here, and afterward as King over all Nations: and ſuch holy extaſies of love and zeale to Chriſt and Zions cauſe were upon a people among us, as rendred them unto a profeſſing people in both Nations that had not like light and zeale, ſuſpected and publickly cenſured to be a fanatick, deluded and Enthuſiaſticall Army and people; and alſo ſuch high and heroick reſolutions carried them on, as made them a wonder, and a dread to all the Nations about us.

Oh, but what is now become of this bleſſed people? doe they not lie as the bones in the valley dead and dry? the eyes of many being ſometimes annointed with the eye-ſalve of Goſpel and ſpirit teaching became ſo bright and clear, as to take a proſpect of that houſe or univerſal ſtate of things promiſed to be ſet up, how are they now grown dim, and cannot ſee beyond the preſent corrupt ſtate of things? the

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ears that were ſometimes open to the voice and counſels of the ſpirit, to rule and teach, and ſteer thereby, how are they now ſtopped, and we ſail by another compaſſe? we are like men that began to build, and the firſt ſtones towards a goodly building were laid in our days, but finding that the raiſing of it up to an higher pitch would put us to more pain and difficulty then we are willing to ſuffer, we are become dead as to any further proceeding therein; is not this written upon the face of all things?

Conſider our teachers, our Goſpel-teachers (I mean) ſuch who have been unto the Church of Chriſt as the Angels of the Lord, now become ſilent and dead as to preſſing forward to the things before, the Renovation and reſtorement of all things by the further comings forth of Chriſt.

---Our Governours and chief Captains, who ſometimes were as a hearth of fire among the wood, and as a torch of fire in a ſheaf, devouring the wicked on the right hand and on the left, are now dead as to bringing up their good beginning to any further growth and maturity; the main Pillars of the old, corrupt, enſlaving and Antichriſtian intereſt yet ſtanding, and the former diſpenſations and works of Providence, and an anſwerable ſubjecting of all things thereunto being not regarded;---the fervent deſires and longings that were among many Saints after a fuller reformation, and their ſorrows and fears for the preſent corruption are for the moſt part ceaſed;---the bleſſed Goſpel-doctrines are grown dusky, the teachers are waxen dim, the work is at a ſtand, and the foundations thereof are covered in the rubbiſh of the old, corrupt intereſts brought in again; and there are few that lay it to heart, or have any judgement or might to diſcern or give warning of this evil time; ſecurity, diviſion, worldly advancement and ſeducing ſpirits, having eaten out that firſt ſimplicity, light and love that was amongſt us.

Add unto all this our ſervitude unto men; they among us that once diſputed the intereſt of Chriſt, liberty of Saints, and the common good of the Nation, againſt the higheſt and proudeſt enemies thereof, how are they now become

the ſervants of men, acquieſcing in, and for advantage ſake preferring the conſtitutions, commandements and politique devices of men, men corrupted from the firſt purity and practice, before the promoting of the pr cious cauſe of Chriſt, and the conſcience of their duty and ſervice therein; of whom one may take up that ancient parable, *Gen.* 49. 14. *Iſſachar is a ſtrong Aſſe, Couching down between two burdens, and he ſaw that reſt was good, and the Land that it was pleaſant, and bowed his ſhoulder to bear, and became a ſervant unto tribute.*

A fifth ſign that the Lord is departed.

THe heavens have been for ſome ſeaſon ſilent, and little or no anſwer of God among us, a further ſign that the Lord is not among us as in former years; —— the viſible adminiſtrations of Gods providence being Gods voice, whereby he ſometimes ſpake graciouſly to us, and terribly to our enemies, have been for too long a time withheld, and the windows of heaven ſhut, and we have been left under many darkneſſes and deſertions; while the intereſt of Chriſt and his people was in our hands, and the debate about it was depending between us and our enemies, then the Lord went before us through the flouds of many waters, all the ſeveral parties that roſe up againſt us; neither the enchantments of *Balaam*, nor the Armies of his King, from one hill or another could prevail againſt us; ſuch witneſſe God gave unto us by a continued ſeries of providence ſo viſibly and glorioully for us, as made that noble cauſe among us and the Adherents unto it a terrour and aſtoniſhment to all the Nations about us; but when this cauſe began to be declined, and other fruit to appear, the countenance of heaven alſo changed toward us, ſince which time our wheels have driven heavily, our Armies are ſcattered by the Heathen, proceedings at home are fruitleſſe, and expeditions abroad do as little; we looked for much, and loe it came to little; and when we brought it home, God did blow upon it; why, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, becauſe of mine houſe that is waſte, and

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ye run every man unto his own house; therefore the heavens over us are stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit *Hag.* 1.9,10.

In days past the spirit of the Lord was among us, making a way for us in the Wilderness, in paths untrodden before, and a way in the deep waters, in ways which no man had passed through before; he put the honour upon us to bind our Kings in chains, and our Nobles in fetters of Iron; then all instruments moved swiftly, and work went on apace; one work after another was set before us, and successes answered and came in one upon another; those yoaks that our Fathers groaned and bled under for many years, we shook off in a few months: those bulwarks of *Babylon*, Monarchy and Prelacy that had been taking root for many hundreds of years, were thrown down in one day; such clearness of judgement and willingness of heart was among us, as made hard work easie, and rough services smooth; the Lord casting in his pleasant gales and warming beames for our succour in the work; all our works were crowned with glory and successe, whilst sincere affections to Christ were our principle, and the advancement of him in his reconciling grace and reigning glory was our end in all.

But into what a confusion and desertion we are now fallen, they have little spiritual eye-sight that cannot discern; Private and lesser interests are attended, whilst that which is of the highest and general concernment is at a stand; unto the further prosecution whereof there is no skill nor strength, nor life, nor heart; --- while reformation moved upon the faith and prayers, tears and travels of Gods people, it was as an Engine upon the wheels, or as a Ship with wind and tyde; but since these were deserted, how do our Pilots towe and hale, and weary themselves in vain? what successe have most Teachers had upon their people, but to Preach them into lukewarmness and slumber, since they left to be a praying, waiting people, or the communion of them that are such? How has a victorious Army been scattered, since they left off to be a praying Army? how many interruptions and rebukes have the Rulers met with since they failed in ano-

ther bottom, and by another wind and tyde? whole yeers cannot bring forth now what monthes, weekes, and daies produced formerly; and that work that was carried to some observable height in a troublesome time, is found too hard to be proceeded in in a time of peace; oh that we would consider the hand that is upon us, and how faith, prayer, and the smiles of providence, and together therewith the work of the Lord are departed from us to another people.

The sixth Signe.

IT appears by what has been said, that our soule is bruised, and the outward state of things too, yet we have no mind to be healed, nor to heale one another, and offers of healing in the way it may be had are not accepted, which may be added as one sign more that the Lord is gone: they that had pitty and shewed compassion upon us in our former troubles, when our burdens were heavier then our groanings, and by their spirituall gifts and righteous Administrations as fathers and nurses did nourish and feed us in the beginning of the day, how are their bowels now shut up that they have no compassion towards the travel of their soule whom they have begotten in Christ Jesus!

When the former shepherds, Kings and Prelates had for a long time exercised Lordship and cruelty over us, and after them others of a more Reformed stamp rose up and sought the preeminence, then God raised up shepheards who for a season fed us with the better pasture of judgement and justice, Light and truth; then there was bread and balme in the hand to refresh the many hungry soules and bruised shoulders which the yokes and bonds of the Oppressors had made upon us; but now that we are as sheep scattered by seducing spirits, or worldly interests, whereby many are become sick, weak, and many fallen asleep, and we in a condition (if grace prevent not) of relapsing into our first darkness and slavery, yet how few are there that have an eye of pity, or a word of healing for us? we are like

a man

a man wounded, that being vexed with pain is full of fury and anguish, and troublesome to every body: so we being wounded with the rebuke of the Lord, are of a crooked and bitter spirit, hurting and offending one another, having neither healing in our selves, nor accepting it from others.

I know we have sought to many Physicians that we might be healed; but our cold, formall, and generall teachings, and shreds and broken pieces for Reformation in Government, are but as they that sewed pillows, and daubed with untempered mortar, which profited not. There are breaches and sores in the body, the visible state of things, but the distemper lies in our vitals; our faith is gone, our first love is lost, the Cause of Christ lies buried among us, and our hearts are dead unto it.

And whereas there is but one way remaining, which our former faith and experience, and a praying People at this day do tell us of, and propound unto us as the only healing dispensation both unto Church and States to wit, a subjecting of our souls and lives, our Ministry and Government, our Laws and Constitutions, with all Interests and Affairs, unto that Kingdom and Authority, and those Designs and Works foregoing it, which the Prophecies of old, and Providences of late have intended for these last times; yet this way and course is of no acceptation with us; but however pretended to formerly, and in the judgement of spirituall Gospel-Christian, of more weight then any other that has been proposed, is now excluded as a seditious Principle, destructive to the present state of things, and the work of a fanatick, brain-sick, and unsound Generation; whence our Conclusion appears too true, That the Lord is not among us as formerly.

The

The ſins that have brought this deſertion upon us, what they are, and with whom they are found.

NOw to make an enquiry what thoſe ſins committed among us may be, which have provoked the Lord to bring upon this Generation, formerly a People of right noble Principles and glorious Atchievements, ſuch a deſerted eſtate as it now lies under, ſeems to be a work becoming all ſuch Chriſtians as would turn away the preſent rebukes that are upon us; in which undertaking although the evil may appear more groſly and viſibly upon ſome particular parties, more then upon others: yet foraſmuch as upon juſt and impartiall ſearch I finde no parties nor perſons whatſoever, neither my ſelf nor others, that can ſtand aſide and ſay, we are free from partaking in thoſe ſins that have provoked this cloud upon us; therefore in plainneſs of heart, without fear or flattery, I ſhall briefly declare what things I have againſt every one, from the greateſt to the leaſt among us.

The ſin of the Army, what.

TO begin with the Army firſt; theſe, while a Goſpel-ſpirit was upon them, enflaming them with zeal to the Lord Jeſus, with love to all Saints, and with a ſpirit of judgement to ſee righteouſneſs and freedom brought forth unto all men, the Lord forgave the many haltings, ſlips, and infirmities that through darkneſs or temptation they were overtaken with; but ſince then an evil heart of unbelief is found in them, in not following the Lord unto the perfecting of that work, the foundation whereof was laid by their own hands, that frame of ſpirit that was upon them when they were led forth againſt the oppreſſive and Antichriſtian intereſts, would have carried them on (if worldly advancement and ſecurity had not quenched it) unto a more excellent way to a more perfect and ſpirituall Reformation then yet is brought forth.

While

While their work was against the outer-courts and outer-works of *Babylon*, onely the bricks and clay, and grosser things thereof, they had spirit and faith for service; but when they came into her celled Chambers and Marble Towers, her golden wedge and goodly garment, these they spared from the sword: while Monarchy and Prelaticall Clergie, and the former state of things appeared in a more loathsome and ugly form, so long the Sword had no mercy on them, till they were cut off; but no sooner did these appear again under new names, and a more comely habit, but they were admitted again unto their first power, seat, and authority as before, and accepted into favour and embraces as much as ever.

When the Army was labouring in streights, difficulties and perillous undertakings, and the Lord alone appeared unto them as their light & comfort, then their hearts were tender, and their eyes enlightened to behold the King in his beauty, and the things that were afar off; then they saw many things amiss among us, (*viz.*) in the Government, will and pleasure to have been long exercised instead of judgement and justice; humane policy and contrivance to be still set up above the dictates of sanctified Reason and Gospel-light. In the Magistrates, a declination from their first Principles of light and zeal, and from the just expectations of their godly and faithfull adhering friends. In the Law and Practitioners of it, they saw many Statutes, Customes, and Proceedings kept up, that were imposed in times of Tyranny and Superstition, and exercised to the hinderance of light and Reformation, and to the prejudice of Christian and Civill Liberty. In the Ministry, much Antichristian leven, as the investure into it worldly, the maintenance of it worldly, and the fruits of many in it, no better then Philosophy and vain deceit, teaching for Doctrines the divinations of their owne brain, or the commandements of other men: In the whole frame of things, such corruption, rottennesse, and decay, as that they judged a reducement of all things unto pure Gospel-rule, and just and spirituall Principles (a thing never done before) would

prove

prove the onely thing that would answer the designation of so many glorious Providences, the faith of Gods People, and the present exigency of things as they stood with us; which would consist in giving the preheminence unto the Peoples safety, above personall prerogative; unto the Word of God and Law of Christ, above carnall Reason and the politick contrivances of fleshly wisdome; unto spirituall gifts above humane qualification; and in owning and exalting the Kingdome of Christ on Earth, above all righteous Principles of State-policy, or Nationall-interest whatsoever. And such a state of things they judged by faith and well-doing as well attainable as promised; *for brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy Officers peace, and thine exactors righteousnesse*, Isa. 60. 17.

But when after finall Victory over the common Enemy, having tasted and furfeited with the sweetnesse of ease and rest, they found the further progress in the Worke would expose them to a further juncture of difficulties yet behind; instead of applying themselves to the Lord for new oyle and trimmed Lamps, a further supply of light and faith (as they had alwaies done in like case before) they betook themselves under pretence of avoiding Anarchy and confusion, into a new contrived way of their own, built upon the old Arbitrary and carnall Principles; and sheltering themselves under the shadow thereof, did thereupon put a stop unto all further proceedings in the Work; and so by degrees are relapsed into those dark and defiled Principles, as they were ashamed of before.

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The beginning of this desertion I observed with some grief of heart, did too visibly appear in the Officers imediately upon their return from that crowning victory at *Worcester*; their frequent meetings unto prayer and consultation were then intermitted, and after some Months were revived for a little space, and produced some faint and languishing addresses to the Authority then in Being; their spirits grew dull and heavy, the sense whereof moved one of them in a speech of an hour long, with many tears to bewail his own and others slips, and another of them with much fervency, to urge the prosecution of the cause of his dear Jesus; this being the time of the expiring of their zeal as a dying coal of fire.

Unto this unbelief they have added further offence against God, in sitting down at ease in the pleasures of this unreformed state of things, whil'st the afflictions of *Joseph*, the despised cause and people of God are not remembred; the victories and salvations vouchsafed them of God, and the rewards and honors they have received from men, have put upon them such a glory and greatness, that they are fallen in love with their present condition; so that the preservation of themselves in these fleshly privileges has so taken up their hearts, as that they are dead unto any further promoving of that blessed work, which the Lord has yet to do among his people, and by them upon the Rulers, States and Kingdoms, and interests of all Nations; the present state of things pleasing them so well, as that they have a jealous eye against whatsoever would loosen the roots of it, and in defence therof have made shipwrack of their first principles, and have taken up such mercenary, treacherous, and unchristian principles, as (whereas they were a beauty and sweet savor before) have rendred them a stink and contempt unto the people; it being to be feared that they succeding that wicked Generation that is fallen, in their houses and possessions, they have partaked too much in their sins, and do now inherit their dark, corrupt, and Anti-christian principles which were their ruin: whether by these sins they have not provoked the Lord to leave them unto this their dark, dry, and unfruitful state. Oh that they might consider.

The Sin of the Powers that have been, and are.

AS concerning the Powers, this Nation has had variety; an hasty succession of one Power after another, the Government having been transmitted from one unto another, until it has passed through the hands of all or most parties among us, from the grossest to the purest: some of these there were, that for a season suited their Administrations to the present designs of Providence, and exercised their power in a zealous and well guided subserviency unto that grouth of light and reformation God determined to bring forth; while they did so, the Lord breathed upon their Counsels, and lifted up their horn above the horns of Monarchy and Prelacy, that had tyrannized before, and the Inhabitants of *Judah*, the People of God were their strength in the Lord of Hoasts their God: Instead of all other Rules of State-policy in use before, they were by a good hand directed unto a better Rule, to wit, that the time of favouring *Zion* and of doing great things was come, and that all Administrations of Government ought to intend and look towards that, or should be broken; while they steered by this polar, they were led through many dangerous shelves and boisterous seas, unto many pleasant shores and refreshing harbors of victories and salvations; but when they had overcome most of their fears, and had brought things unto that state as answered their principles, and satisfied their interests, they settled into security and ease, and so lost the sense of that duty incumbent upon them, either as to any fuller redress of common grievance, or to any fuller reformation, whereby they might have been capable to have served the Lord in his dispensations towards *Zion*.

The neglect hereof became also the sin of the succeeding Powers unto this day that came upafter, whereby the Lord has been, and yet is provoked to deny success to their several Assemblies and proceedings, and to deny unto the Nation the benefit of receiving by their hands any healing or

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cure at all: the introducing and eſtabliſhment of another Intereſt, to wit, the preſent ſtate of things, being that which has buried their firſt Light, and Zeal, Vows and Engagements out of ſight and mind; and in the place thereof has begotten in them a lamentable darkneſs unto the further improvement of thoſe firſt bleſſed principles, in the proſecution of that firſt glorious Cauſe, in order unto thoſe approaching good things that have already dawned upon us.

And until all private, perſonal, and ſelf-advancing intereſt be laid aſide by thoſe in power, and that firſt principle be aſſumed again, to wit, The ſubmitting all deſigns and intereſts, all exerciſes of Rule and power unto the help and furtherance of that ſhaking renovating work and Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus, and the admitting Providences, Propheſies, and former diſpenſations for a guiding Rule, before all reaſon of State whatſoever; until it be thus, I do not expect that any parties of men, or forms of Government, whether by One or Many ſhall adminiſter that health and cure to this Nation, as the nature of our ſickneſs and wound calls for: God will not bleſs the moſt righteous principles, nor moſt reformed pretences, when they are improved either againſt, or not about that which is his ſpecial work in any age: *Be wiſe therefore oh yee Kings, be inſtructed yee Judges of the earth; Kiſs the Son leſt he be angry:* Yee are buſied about leſſer Matters, while yee neglect the weightier, Judgment, Mercy, Faith, and the love of God, the taking off yokes, and breaking bonds, the purging out of the old ſcum, and the new defilements that are found in Government, Miniſtry, Court, and upon the whole frame of things: a ſpirit unto this is witheld from you, becauſe there is ſin found among you.

The Sin of our Teachers.

THere is also found folly and sin among our Teachers, which has added affliction to the misery; I speak of such, who as the brighter Stars in our heavens, have opened unto us the knowledge of Gospel-misteries in a clearer way, and in fuller measures of light and comfort unto dark and wounded sinners, than others had done before; by means whereof the knowledge of the Lord Jesus did so cover our Land, as that the mists and fogs of former darkness, the yoke and spirit of bondage, which bowed down both ours and our fathers necks, Legality, Superstition and Tyranny, began to give place and vanish away: they were for a season as burning and shining Lights; their Doctrine kindled such a fire in the hearts of many, as burnt down the old, corrupted, National Church-state, with the Pillars and Gates thereof, Monarchy, and Prelacy, Court, and Conclave; their Doctrine sent forth such a Light as gave a just and worthy advancement unto Grace above all Creature-works; unto Christ as sole Law-giver in the Churches, above all National or Politick Jurisdiction; and unto the Unction and gifts of the Spirit above all School-learning, or humane qualification whatsoever; insomuch as old things began to pass away, and a glimpse of better things appeared, a new Church, new Government, new King, and new World to be looked for.

But these Teachers being had in high esteem for their works sake, and having received double honor, instead of giving the glory to their Master, took it to themselves; and looking upon themselves as excelling many in Gifts, as embraced of many Christians, as honored of great Men, they fell in love with these their fleshly privileges; and thereby were led aside to seek after honor to their Gifts, ease to their Persons, and establishment to their Interests, and so neglected the promoting of those preti-

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ous and glorious Truths, which themſelves had travel'd with before, and which rendred them as a ſweet ſavour unto God, and as the Angels of the Lord to many of his People; and ſo by degrees at laſt fell into a compliance with that very Intereſt under a new name and diſguiſe, which themſelves had abandoned before, as under the deteſtable names of Tyranny and Anti chriſtianiſm: ſome of them leaving the work of the Church for a lazy Colledge life; and the Miniſtry of the Word to attend upon Philoſophy; leaving the Communion of Chriſtians for the treaſures and promotions of *Pharaohs* houſe, chuſing rather theſe treaſures of *Egypt* than the reproach of Chriſt; —— Others become Tryers, Lords over their breth en, exerciſing that Authori y by humane deputation, which themſelves had contended againſt before, as robbery to the Churches of Chriſt: —— and many others with their whole Churches fallen into ſuch a ſlumber, ſecurity and eaſe in preſent things, as that they have loſt the exerciſe of their ſpiritual ſenſes to diſcern the promiſed good things to come, and what is their preſent duty in order thereunto: wherefore the Lord has brought upon many of our Teachers a ſore deſertion for their ſin, which may be ſeen herein.

Firſt, in the loſs of that faith, light, and zeal they had in the beginning of the day, and which the further work of the day cals for, in order to the building of *Zion*, and the lifting up the Lord Jeſus unto that Throne of Dignity and Power over all the Earth as he is annointed unto, by the overturning and diſſolution of the preſent ſtate of all Nations and Kingdoms.

Secondly, in their want of ſpiritual ſavor and reliſh unto a fuller Reformation of things, and unto them that ſeek and expect ſuch things.

Thirdly, in that they had ſometimes eſcaped the Corruptions of the Anti-chriſtian Miniſtry, Lordly preheminence, rigid impoſing principles, plurality of places, greedineſs of Lucre, Men-pleaſing, Time-ſerving practiſes, living in pleaſures, ſitting, lying down, loving to ſlumber,

ſlumber; but they are now again entangled therein, and ſeem to be ſo well pleaſed in the preſent polluted ſtate of things, as that they are become dead to thoſe deſires and workings of heart after thoſe better promiſes of good things to come on earth, that they ſometimes preſſed after: thus are many of our Stars fallen from heaven, as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely fruit; whereby we may diſcern ſome ſigns of the times that are upon us.

The Sin of the Churches.

WHoſoever ſhall caſt an obſerving eye upon the Churches, the pureſt Churches, may find in them alſo the folly and deſertion that at this day is come upon us; let not his words be an offence, who does and has born a dear affection towards them from their loweſt ſtate; concerning them I have this to ſay in their praiſe, that their beginning was ſmall and contemned of men, but owned of God; ſome clearer beam of Goſpel-truth it was, that at firſt led them forth to ſeek a more perfumed bed of love for the Lord, a more undefiled way of Worſhip, and fellowſhip than the looſe and National way was, wherein the Prophetical and Kingly Offices of Chriſt might be more owned and exerciſed in ſetting him up as ſole Law-giver in all his Churches, and in giving liberty to his Spirit to ſpeak by whom it liſted; then was there a lively preſence of the Lord among them, giving them light and favours unity among themſelves, and harmony of ſpirit with the Adminiſtrations of Providence; and many other Ornaments of beauty and comlineſs he put upon them, making them who at firſt were as a little branch, to encreaſe and ſpread until they had covered the face of the Nation.

But whereas theſe Gifts were given of God, as firſt-fruits and beginnings of a more excellent ſtate, and as the Manna to thoſe in the Wilderneſs, as comforts and helps for edifying of the Body, and for the following of the

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Lord in those further works he had to do; instead of making this good use of them, they sate down in these Wilderness privileges, and became rich and full therein, and bestowed them upon their lusts; some decking themselves with them to seek honor; others using them for strife and debate, to make a rent in the Body; some making Merchandize of them; and others abusing them to wantonness and liberty in the flesh; all placing their contentment and rest in these things, few seeking that true rest which is in Christ himself.

Whil'st they were little, and in a low condition, then the Lord was pretious, his Laws, Government, and Interest were preferred above all: then they saw the frame of things that then was, to be a corrupted thing, and that a separation from it, and the seeking after a more Evangelical state of things, was that which the Lord called for at their hands: but now that they are grown to be eminent and considerable in the World, their Members become Lords and Rulers, Masters, Tryers, Jaylors, Officers and Exactors every where, these new promotions, such as they are, have so far blinded their eyes, that they have lost that light and sight they sometimes had of better things, new Church, new Government, new King, and a renewed state of all things: security in their gifts and privileges, and glory with men, having so filled and stalled their hearts, that they are become dead unto those further and higher hopes they had before.

When their elder sister the presbytery, which run well in the beginning, began to stint light, and Reformation unto their way alone, and did engage the Worldly Powers to their Protection herein, this was looked upon by Churches and Christians of further light as a very offensive thing: but now the Churches by stinting Reformation unto their own present state and measure, and staying upon a corrupt and worldly Government for their defence herein, have not only justified their elder Sister in all that she has done, but have done far worse, by how much their light and experience, and Gods appearances

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with them in order to a better way, have been more than the other had: Where is that first indignation against worldly Court, Church, and Clergy, the Nurseries of darkness and slavery, with all their branches? Where is their Zeal for a Restorement of Spirit to themselves, of Mercy and Justice to all men, and of Liberty to the whole Creation? Where is their first Faith, living upon God, leaning upon Christ, looking for Him, and seeking the Law at his lips? Where is their Mercy and Love towards weak Brethren, the lame, the sick, and tempted ones? What is become of this Spirit? Is not that Old principle, that dark, defiled, and earthly Spirit which was sometimes cast out, returned again into the house new swept and garnished, and with him seven Spirits worse than the first? Thus the Churches must bear their part in that blame and shame that is done among us, and do partake in that defertion that is upon us, which may be seen herein.

In the darkness upon their Watchmen that they have no vision; themselves asleep in security and ease, while they are torn by division, and many of their children scattered and carried away after worldy lust, or spirits of delusion: I speak not against Church-order, nor all therein; there are some names at this day who have not defiled their garments, who believe and cry and look for the redemption of Israel, whose light, and faith, and zeal shall encrease till it set on fire the new-repaired walls of old Babel that are yet standing among us.

The sin of those Christians who are not in Churches.

AS the sin and defection of this day has entered into the purest Churches, so it is to be found amongst men of clearest Light, and highest pretences: there are not few in this Nation who have not joyned themselves unto any visible Church, although many of them are to be esteemed

esteemed not the least nor meanest Members in the invisible, of which their single and unassociated condition this accompt may be given; many of these having received a clearer light in the Mysterie of the Gospel than the generality of others had, and a sight of a more spiritual life and communion with God, and of more unity, largness, and love to all Saints, than most (I say not all) in the Churches were grown up unto, upon this ground they reserved themselves free from Church-relation unto those further Truths, Enjoyments, and Wayes they had already a taste of, and were in hope with all Saints to comprehend and attain unto; in this state while they lived and leaned upon God alone, and kept themselves as chast virgins for Christ, not taking to themselves any covering of flesh, self-glorying, self-righteousnes, parts, gifts, or worldly Interests, but the Lord only for their righteousnes, and salvation, then had they spiritual eye-sight to discern the darkness and corruption that was upon all things, and so look for that better and perfecter state of things promised, that the Lord would come as consuming fire against *Babylon*, as a Finer among themselves and the Churches, dissolving these old heavens and earth, and setting up new heavens and new earths, a new Church and new government, wherein dwelleth righteousnes, and then they were afraid of sitting down, or setling in any thing before the Lord and his righteousnes.

But Satan, that can transform himself as an Angel of Light, has mingled their Wine with Water, their Spirits and spiritual principles with his refined witchcrafts, Philosophical Notions, wandering speculations of the Godhead out of Christ crucified, loosing the simplicity of the Gospel in Allegories; by which means too many are puft up with their knowledge as excelling others, and their hearts from away from the Lord, and their minds from the Faith to the idols of the brain; and have so far lost that humble, lively, active Spirit, that Faith and Love into crucified Christ they sometimes had; that they are

scattered and fallen back, some into Mystical legality, some into the world, and others into a flatness and deadness of heart as to any further work for Christ, whilst another people among us reckoned by these in a far lower form in the School of Christ have a Spirit upon them to cry unto the Lord for the perfecting of that work he has so gloriously begun amongst us: So that we may say, How are our beautiful things become a wilderness? How are our Goodly stones, Army, Rulers, Teachers, Churches, and others that seemed by the Spirit of Grace, by afflictions, and by signal Providences to be prepared for the building, how are they now covered in the rubbish, and the lines of Confusion and Stones of Emptiness stretched over them.

And thus he that in the first and purest Gospel-ages placed his abomination to stand where it ought not, in Churches, Ordinances, Spiritual Gifts, and Souls of men, has done the like in these dayes, having corrupted our graces and mercies, the most Reformed parties and things among us; and having perverted things that were given for good to be to our hurt; so that instead of improving our good Beginnings unto a further growth and maturity, our light and deliverances unto further light and deliverance, we are set down at ease therein, pleasing our selves in present things; those better things reserved as yet with Christ in God to be brought forth in their season for them that wait and believe, and those works that are to be done in order to the making way thereto being forgotten and no more pressed after: And so (I wish I could not say it) we are degenerated into that old, dark, and Egyptian Spirit that we seemed to have escaped, which consisted herein, ——— in the putting a stint and stop unto any further light and further Reformation above what their carnal principles and Interests would bear; ——— and in a compliance with, and clasping about the Powers of the World for their defence therein, and for the putting a check upon all further Truth and Reformation, even as consisted with the safety of their

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place, order, and nation, and such-like worldly Interests; which course as it was the ruine of them that are already fallen, so it will prove to this generation if they repent not, and do their first works.

What Dispensation that is, that can bring Healing to us.

HAving hitherto made some search of what nature is that wound we have received from the Lord, and whatare the evils which have procured it, it will much concern us to enquire where Healing may be find for us, or what foundation may be laid which may set us in such a condition of righteousnes, peace, and settlement, as shall not be subject to be corrupted, or shaken any more. There is a Principle, which as it has been of blessed use to us in the late works of Providence among us, so it may give good Light to us in this Enquiry, which is this; ——— That the appearance of Jesus Christ in his Grace and Glory, and the advancement of him as King over all the earth, that is, so as that all foundations raised for the Interest either of worldly Tyranny, or Antichristian Worship be thrown down; and that all things both in Church and Government, do submit themselves to be ordered by the Presence and Word of the Lord among his people; that this is the great Result intended by Providence in those over-turnings which have been, and may yet come to pass among us. ——— Their eyes are grown dim, who of late begin to say, That there was no further end in the late Turns of Providence among us, than the preservation of Gods People in a worldly freedom and peace, that they be not destroyed either by the common enemy, or by divisions among themselves: As Light and Reformation has come forth at sundry seasons, and in divers measures; so in any Nation where God had any work of this kind to bring forth, he gave no quiet unto that Church or Government that was therein, untill they

submitted themselves unto that measure of Light and Reformation intended for that Age, and People.

This Principle being laid for a Foundation, these Conclusions do with clearness follow:

FIrst, That no kind nor sort of Government whatsoever, though acting upon the most just and righteous Principles, can administer healing or lasting peace unto us, whil'st it yields not it self in subjection unto the great determinations and works of Providence among us, in a subservient co-working with the Lord in the plucking up the remaining Walls of great *Babel* yet standing, and in making way for those better things which Prophesies of old, Providences of late, and the present Expectation of a waiting People are in travel with: if it may be admitted, that God has a great work to do among us (as who will not blush to deny) and that all civil Administrations are like to stand or fall, according as they shall be found submitting thereunto or otherwayes; then no form or way of Government whatsoever can bring peace to it self or the people, whilst the present works of God are not regarded by it.

Secondly, Neither a way of Government reduced as exactly as may be unto the judicial Law of *Moses*, nor any form of Worship, how spiritual soever, considered barely in themselves, can bring healing to us; that form of Government delivered by *Moses*, and that of Worship by the Apostles were in themselves good and excellent above all other; but when corruption entered in, and the Lord departed, both the Administrations themselves, and the People under them were scattered, the one into the Literal, the other into the Mystical *Babylon*.

Thirdly, that the nearer approaching and fuller Revelation of Jesus Christ, in the pouring out his Spirit upon

us, and the taking to himself his great power to reign over us, in the more visible exercise of all his Offices, as Saviour, Law-giver, King and Judge, and a heart waiting for him, and willing to submit all things among us both in Church and State, in an humble and gracious subordination thereunto, is that healing Expedient only that can bring redress and cure to all the wounds and breaches whether civil or spiritual that are upon us: I remember what *Hosea* saies, *chap.* 10. 3. *For now they shall say, we have no King, because we feared not the Lord, what then should a King do to us?* And *chap.* 13. 10. *I will be thy King, where is any other that may save thee in all thy Cities, and thy Judges, of whom thou saidst, give me a King and Princes?* If any that are set down at ease in the present privileges God has bestowed upon us, shall promise themselves peace therein; or if any others that are sensible the present state of things to be a bed too short to rest in, shall hope to find peace for the people by some other way or form of worldly Administration; let all such know, it is not in parties or privileges to have or give peace, whil'st the Lord is not admitted as King and Saviour among us, whose rising only is that which shall bring healing to the Nations.

That such a Dispensation as this shall be, and that more universal and glorious than any before it has been; since the sayings of the Prophets and Apostles, are by many not so understood and believed; let an observation obvious and plain to all men be our Argument herein, which is this: That the three hundred years last past, have been a season wherein Light and Truth have visited this Western World in a succession of Administrations, the latter still exceeding the former; in all which, the Lord Jesus has been gradually brought to light, and by which he has still gained ground upon that Anti-christian state, that hath a long time ruled the world; the bringing of himself to light, and the stretching forth of the line of his dominion over all parties and interests whatsoever, in order to the regaining the utmost ends of the Earth

himself, having been his design in all his spiritual and providential Administrations, at divers seasons and in several degrees that have been upon us: wherefore we may conclude, the Lord will not cease prosecuting his former method, to shake and distress all Nations, Governments, Parties and Interests, that hold their Authority, Maintainance, or Place in a dependance upon, and for a support unto that Mother of Whoredomes, the Anti-christian State; until the Kingdoms of this World become the Kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.

That such a Dispensation as this, is that only that can heal us, and the Nations: our present Experience may be instead of all other Arguments to bring us under conviction: if any inferiour privileges or blessings could save us, below the Lords shining, saving and raigning Presence among us, the People of God in this Nation have had a larger measure of Privileges than many Ages before, than all the Nations of the World besides have at this day: Yet how dead and carnal? How far from a truly spiritual, reformed, and raigning State we are at this day, in the midst of all the Victories, Salvations and other favors we are set down in? Let the surfeiting in pompe and pleasure, and the cares of this life, and smiting our fellow servants, the new Confedracies with the old, rotten Interests, visible upon many among all sorts, and the indisposition that is almost upon us all unto a more thorough redress and Reformation be a witness against us: wherefore though many Enemies are fallen, yet we are not saved, because the Lord is not King among us, we will not have him to raign over us.

Now by what means the Lord Jesus arising as the Sun of Righteousness will work healing for the Nations, the great effects that shall go before and attend his Coming to shew, which are these two: *the making all old things to flee away, and the making all things new*: As all the several dispensations of Light and Truth, have in their seasons brought an Earthquake upon that part of the World where they were brought forth: so that fuller and

and more glorious Revelation of the Lord Jesus in his healing Grace and raigning glory referved for these last times, inasmuch as it shall spread it self far and wide over all the Earth, shall shake and take down the whole frame of things as now in Church and Government, all States and Interests every where: and as a worthy man sometimes banished for the Testimony of Christ, writes; *The Change in the Heavens and Earth, is meant a change in the qualities, and face, and fashion of all things, in Churches and Common Weales, Kingdoms and Nations; the old rotten frame of all things in Religions and Governments shall be broken down in Earthquakes, turning all the World upside down, so as it must be all made new again; the old fashion of Church and World being waxen old; as a Moth-eaten garment, having so many Mothes fretting in it, as not a sound part left in it, good for any thing, cannot abide a shake or pull, but falls in pieces. Therefore it must be laid by as men do old cloathes, quite worn in pieces; and then he that laid the first foundations of the World, will make all new again:* Which is the second Effect of his Coming, a new state of things, the street whereof of Gold, and her gates of Pearle, and no Temple was seen therein, for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it; and there is no need neither of the Sun, nor of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God shall lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof: happy are they who know how to use the present state of things so, as that they be not hindered thereby (as many at this day are) from pressing on towards those better things, and that Grace that is to be brought forth at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew who is the blessed and onely potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords: to whom be Dominion, Honor, and Glory for ever.

The End.